

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CABINET – 1 DECEMBER 2020  
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**PERFORMANCE EXCEPTION REPORT – QUARTER 2 (2020-21)**

**1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report summarises our strategic performance data on an exception basis following the monitoring and review of performance reports by Corporate Directors and Heads of Service. This report covers the period 1 July to 30 September 2020.
- 1.2 Any projects and key performance indicators reported as ‘not on schedule’ or ‘target not met’ is exception reported in the appendices to this report.

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the contents of this report and approves any proposed actions highlighted in the appendices.

**3. Explanation**

- 3.1 A performance exception report is presented to the Cabinet on a quarterly basis as part of our current performance management framework.
- 3.2 By working with Corporate Directors and Heads of Service in the production of the report we embed accountability for performance within our Officer structure. This allows for a flow of detailed information to and from the council’s leadership.
- 3.3 For this report covering Quarter 2 of 2020-21 it is important to note that the impacts of Covid-19 are being felt by the council’s services. This is a contributory factor in some projects which are not expected to be completed within the year or with performance indicators which have not met their quarterly outturns.

**4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

**5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 Failure to deliver projects and key performance indicators may have a financial impact for the council. Where this is the case, this will be referenced in the relevant text within the report and associated appendices. Any financial impact will also be considered, and reported where necessary, within the quarterly budget monitoring reports.

**6. Risk Management Implications**

- 6.1 A risk assessment of our performance management framework can be reviewed quarterly on the council’s strategic Risk Register.

**7. Security and Terrorism Implications**

7.1 There are no security and terrorism implications directly arising from the contents of this report.

**8. Procurement Implications**

8.1 There are no procurement implications directly arising from the contents of this report.

**9. Climate Change Implications**

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications directly arising from the contents of this report.

**10. Health and Wellbeing Implications**

10.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications directly arising from the contents of this report.

**11. Communication and Engagement Implications**

11.1 There are no communication and engagement implications directly arising from the contents of this report.

**12. Link to Corporate Priorities**

12.1 This report is linked to all the council's current corporate priorities as it shows the status of those business projects and performance targets associated within each priority.

**13. Equality and Diversity**

13.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was not completed because this report does not propose changes to existing service-related policies or the development of new service related policies.

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**Date:** November 2020

**Background Papers:**

Appendix One - Business Plan Projects  
Appendix Two - Key Performance Indicators

**Business Plan Projects – Quarter 2 (2020-21)**

Progress for all projects under each of our five Corporate Priorities is summarised here.

10 per cent of our Business Plan projects have been completed to the end of Quarter 2. A further 81 per cent of these projects are on schedule and another 5 per cent have yet to commence. There are just three projects currently not on schedule and details about these are shown in the next table.

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Purple (completed)</b>	<b>Green (on schedule – no risks)</b>	<b>Amber (on schedule – with risks)</b>	<b>Red (not on schedule)</b>	<b>Grey (not started)</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>1 – Our Community</b>	<b>3</b> (20%)	<b>9</b> (60%)	<b>2</b> (13%)	<b>0</b> (0%)	<b>1</b> (7%)	<b>15</b> (100%)
<b>2 – Our Environment</b>	<b>0</b> (0%)	<b>11</b> (85%)	<b>2</b> (15%)	<b>0</b> (0%)	<b>0</b> (0%)	<b>13</b> (100%)
<b>3 – Our Housing</b>	<b>0</b> (0%)	<b>13</b> (68%)	<b>3</b> (16%)	<b>1</b> (5%)	<b>2</b> (11%)	<b>19</b> (100%)
<b>4 – Our Economy</b>	<b>3</b> (25%)	<b>7</b> (59%)	<b>1</b> (8%)	<b>1</b> (8%)	<b>0</b> (%)	<b>12</b> (100%)
<b>5 – Our Council</b>	<b>1</b> (8%)	<b>7</b> (59%)	<b>2</b> (17%)	<b>1</b> (8%)	<b>1</b> (8%)	<b>12</b> (100%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(10%)</b>	<b>47</b> <b>(67%)</b>	<b>10</b> <b>(14%)</b>	<b>3</b> <b>(4%)</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(5%)</b>	<b>71</b> <b>(100%)</b>

<b>Business Plan Ref</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Head of Service</b>	<b>Service Comments</b>
3.1.1	Prepare, submit, exam and adopt the Local Plan	March 2021	Head of Planning	Hearing sessions are scheduled to be completed by March but an adoption of the Local Plan is unlikely to take place before Summer 2021, assuming it is found to be sound.
4.2.5	Invest in local commercial property which meets the council's agreed investment criteria and supports wider corporate objectives	March 2021	Head of Resources	Due to the current pandemic this project has been put on a short hold while we consider the impact on the market and the economy. We continue to work closely with property agents to consider possible investments in strategic assets, but in the current economic climate it is unlikely any investments will be recommended in the near future. An element of this budget will be used to support the development of the Tewin Road Depot.
5.1.3	Submit applications to the HM Land Registry to register 30 per cent of the council's currently unregistered land in the Borough	March 2021	Head of Law and Administration	<p>In July 2019 a 'pilot' was agreed with Land Registry to include up to 20 applications for voluntary registration. To date 18 applications have been submitted - 9 areas of land have been fully registered, with the registration of 9 other areas of land pending. Because the Land Registry has suspended its project work due to covid-19, confirmation of registration of the remaining areas of land is awaited.</p> <p>In October 2020 Land Registry confirmed it is planning to recommence processing voluntary registration work. Officers involved in this project have now met virtually to agree the next land units for which applications will be made for voluntary registration.</p> <p>So the submission of applications for registration will be resumed.</p>

Key Performance Indicators - Quarter 2 (2020-21)

A summary of our Key Performance Indicators collected over Quarter 2 is shown here.

Total Number of Key Performance Indicators	KPI targets met / exceeded	KPI targets not met	KPI targets met within tolerance
53 (100%)	39 (74%)	10 (19%)	4 (7%)

10 Key Performance Indicators did not meet their targets in Quarter 2. These are exception reported in the next table along with service comments to explain the performance along with a comparison to last year.

Brief description of indicator	Quarter 2 2019-20 Performance		Quarter 2 2020-21 Performance		Service Comments
	Target	Outturn	Target	Outturn	
<p><b>KPI 02</b> - The percentage of council tax collected as a percentage of the total due</p> <p><i>Head of Resources</i></p>	57.00%	57.05%	57.00%	54.55%	<p>Performance is behind target due to financial difficulties some residents are facing during the pandemic. There has been an increase in council tax support claimants and residents contacting the council about difficulties making payments. Consistent with other Hertfordshire local authorities there was a decision made not to take formal recovery action during the Spring lockdown but this has since resumed.</p>
<p><b>KPI 03</b> - The percentage of non-domestic rates collected as a percentage of the total due</p> <p><i>Head of Resources</i></p>	57.40%	58.42%	57.40%	54.86%	<p>Performance is reasonable but collection is down due to the extreme difficulties facing businesses during the pandemic. A lot of businesses have either not been trading throughout 2020 or have seen a considerable drop in trade.</p>
<p><b>KPI 11</b> - Visits in person to, and use of, local museums and galleries (per 1,000 population)</p> <p><i>Head of Policy and Culture</i></p>	62 visits	53 visits	62 visits	3 visits	<p>Neither the Mill Green Museum nor the Welwyn Roman Bath House were open to the public over this quarter due to the pandemic. The demand for flour did drop once supermarket supply chains recovered after lockdown, but we are still seeing consistent orders for our milled flour.</p> <p>This quarter's outturn reflects those visitors for the socially distanced Heritage Open Day, pre-booked guided Mill Tours and our takeaway cream tea service. A new external digital heritage trail in the Mill Green gardens using QR codes was also introduced in this quarter.</p>

Brief description of indicator	Quarter 2 2019-20 Performance		Quarter 2 2020-21 Performance		Service Comments
<p><b>KPI 12</b> - School group visits to, and use of, museums and galleries</p> <p><i>Head of Policy and Culture</i></p>	400 visits	290 visits	400 visits	0 visits	<p>As with KPI 11 both museum heritage sites were closed in this quarter because of their size, layout and inability to offer a covid safe environment to large visiting groups. There were no enquiries from schools in Quarter 2 as it includes the main summer school holiday. On their return in September their main focus has been to fill the gap in student learning after being closed since March. We are looking at other means of engaging with schools in a different way going forward.</p>
<p><b>KPI 30</b> - The number of Decent Home assessments undertaken in properties in the Private Sector</p> <p><i>Head of Community and Housing Strategy</i></p>	200	158	200	56	<p>This reporting period covers a time when the team had reduced its operational activities due to the pandemic. This included responding to complaints that had the potential to cause harm to the occupiers and the threat of illegal eviction. Wherever possible complaints were resolved without home visits so these would have not generated a 'Decent Homes' assessment.</p> <p>Towards the end of July, with the easing of restrictions and the issuing of Government guidance on how to safely work in people's homes, the team started to undertake routine inspections of HMOs again. These were done in accordance with a bespoke covid risk assessment to ensure the safety of both the property occupiers and inspecting officers. This has meant the time taken to arrange and undertake inspections has been considerably longer than in the past.</p>

Brief description of indicator	Quarter 2 2019-20 Performance		Quarter 2 2020-21 Performance		Service Comments
<p><b>KPI 33</b> - The percentage of council tenants 'satisfied' overall with the responsive repairs service provided (based on the last repair completed)</p> <p><i>Head of Property Services</i></p>	92.00%	92.86%	92.00%	84.40%	<p>To improve the overall satisfaction of repairs all returned surveys are scrutinised for trends to enable staff training or to identify failures of materials. Some of the complaints refer to availability of resources that were impacted by the pandemic. This has had a knock on effect in the completion of the repairs and has caused a number of the 'satisfaction' failures in this quarter.</p>
<p><b>KPI 37</b> - The average void property re-let time in days for normal general needs housing (YTD)</p> <p><i>Head of Housing Operations</i></p>	18.00 days	16.40 days	18.00 days	20.88 days	<p>The performance for Quarter Two, whilst being a slight improvement from Quarter One, is still above target and lower than the outturn at the same time last year. We are still feeling pandemic impacts in that contractors working in our void properties need to be staggered due to safe workplace requirements. This increases the number of days needed for work to be completed.</p> <p>Residents are generally able to move fairly quickly as removal services and deliveries returned to normal in this quarter. Over the remainder of this year we are looking at how we can improve the number of 'normal', or short term voids, as a percentage ratio of total voids.</p>



Brief description of indicator	Quarter 2 2019-20 Performance		Quarter 2 2020-21 Performance		Service Comments
<p><b>KPI 64</b> - The percentage occupancy rate for the Weltech Business Centre</p> <p><i>Head of Resources</i></p>	95.00%	100%	98.00%	93.61%	<p>Whilst occupancy remained strong at the start of the Spring lockdown, some businesses have since terminated their tenancies. There have been some internal moves at the centre but take up of new tenancies is low in the current climate. However there is a waiting list for the centre and there has been a small number of businesses signing up.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the centre should return to greater occupancy when there is more economic stability, but 5 units were vacant at the end of this quarter. The financial impact of the fall in occupancy has been incorporated into the financial monitoring and covid reports.</p>
<p><b>KPI 65</b> - The percentage of Housing Needs Register applications assessed within 28 days</p> <p><i>Head of Community and Housing Strategy</i></p>	95.00%	99.35%	95.00%	78.76%	<p>Performance in Quarter 2 has fallen due to Covid 19 meaning all applicants have to be contacted and offered the opportunity to be by-passed if they have symptoms or do not feel comfortable moving during the pandemic.</p> <p>There was a large increase in registered provider nominations in September. This was in part due to them holding properties back during the lockdown period but also due to some new builds all being allocated in September. In the last financial year they were between 11 and 33 per month, in April they were 22 and in September they were 81.</p>
<p><b>KPI 76</b> - The percentage of Estate Management Scheme building applications processed with 8 weeks or other agreed timescale</p> <p><i>Head of Planning</i></p>	--	--	70.00%	59.10%	<p>Within this quarter there were 66 applications determined, of which 27 missed their target date. This results in 59% meeting the 8-week target for a determination while we have dealt with a high volume of enquiries and applications.</p>